

only good for the planet but crucial for his constituents. Florida has already begun to feel the effects of extreme weather made worse by warmer temperatures, and Senator NELSON's work on the issue reflects his deep commitment to Floridians.

In addition to his global outlook, Senator NELSON has shown his willingness and ability to accomplish small changes that can have big benefits for his constituents. In the aftermath of horrific shootings in Florida, he didn't just offer condolences to the victims; he got to work to call attention to gun violence, and he issued calls to action. He partnered with me to introduce legislation that would give law enforcement agencies the tools they need to modernize efforts to combat gun violence. The small technical fix in this legislation—allowing the ATF to digitize its records—would make a world of difference to police trying to solve crimes across the country. I wish his calls to action, like so many of ours, were heard by Congress.

Senator NELSON has devoted his career to public service, and his role in elected office started back in the Florida House of Representatives in 1972. Since then, he has faithfully represented the State of Florida, and we have been fortunate to have him here in the Senate. I am sad to see him go, and the Nation will miss his strong voice on environmental issues. I wish Senator NELSON and his wife, Grace, the best.

TRIBUTE TO BOB CORKER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, BOB CORKER is a businessman. He is a husband, a father, and a grandfather. He is a U.S. Senator. But at his heart, he is a Tennessean.

Senator CORKER's success in business has translated into a successful Senate career. In these uncertain times, where diplomacy sometimes seems reduced to a tweet or a hashtag, Senator CORKER has shown a willingness to refuse to compromise American values for political expediency. Most recently, I was proud to join him and other Senators in sending a letter that triggered an investigation under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act to determine if Saudi officials are responsible for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Senator CORKER also recognizes that reducing nuclear weapon stockpiles is an important step to a more peaceful world, and he was just one of 13 Republicans to vote for the New START treaty.

I thank Senator CORKER for his service here in the Senate and wish him and his wife, Elizabeth, well.

TRIBUTE TO CLAIRE MCCASKILL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Senator MCCASKILL has left an indelible mark on the Senate. A former prosecutor in Missouri, she brought the fight to pro-

tect the most vulnerable in her State and across the country to her work here in the U.S. Senate.

Her work to preserve the Affordable Care Act and protect victims of sexual harassment and violence speak to the depth of her convictions. She has also shown great talent safeguarding our Nation and holding our government accountable as a former chair of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and as a member of the Armed Services Committee.

Senator MCCASKILL has fought hard to protect college students from sexual harassment and assault on campus. Senator MCCASKILL has even spoken of the sexual harassment that she herself faced as a young woman in the Missouri State Legislature. Long before the Nation began talking openly about the extent of sexual harassment and assault across all sectors of our society brought into the open by the #MeToo movement, Senator MCCASKILL prepared a report on the extent of sexual harassment and assault on college campuses. But Senator MCCASKILL has never been a woman content with report-writing; she introduced a bill to help address the issue. And when the Senate didn't move on that bill, she worked directly with colleges, holding public roundtables to call attention to the issue.

That is just a glimpse of the determination that Senator MCCASKILL brings to all of her work on behalf of her constituents. She is a straight shooter. In the face of misinformation campaigns about the Affordable Care Act, Senator MCCASKILL has always stepped up to promote the truth. I have always admired her commitment to preserving that law that helps so many of her rural constituents.

As a former chair of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator MCCASKILL has dedicated much of her Senate service to keeping our country safe. I greatly appreciated her support for my National Guard Empowerment Act, which finally gave our National Guard the tools it needs to protect our Nation and take care of its members.

I will miss Senator MCCASKILL's tenacity, and I am sure that Missouri and the Nation will too. Missouri is losing a champion in the Senate. Marcelle and I wish her, her husband, Joe, and her family the very best in this new chapter.

TRIBUTE TO DEAN HELLER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Senator DEAN HELLER may have been a freshman Senator when he came to this body in 2011, but he was not short on experience. First elected as a Nevada assemblyman in 1990, Senator HELLER has served in government ever since.

During his Senate tenure, Senator HELLER has shown a great interest in

protecting American's data privacy, and he was an important partner in our efforts to pass the USA FREEDOM Act. He was a staunch advocate of that bill, even when many in the Senate were pushing for expanded surveillance powers over Americans. Both of us recognized that though the bill may not have included every provision we wanted, the best way to offer privacy protections was through compromise.

While his tenure here was brief, I have appreciated getting to know Senator HELLER and working with him on issues of great importance. I wish Senator HELLER, his wonderful wife, Lynn, and their four children the very best in this next chapter of their lives.

TRIBUTE TO JEFF FLAKE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know that Senator JEFF FLAKE believes, as I do, that the Senate at its best can be the conscience of our Nation. Lately, I believe the Senate has been less than that. In the closing months of his tenure in the Senate, however, Senator FLAKE has spoken about his hopes for this body and for our Nation. What is more, throughout his tenure, he has on many occasions reached across the aisle to bridge the partisan divide for the good of the Nation.

When I first approached Senator FLAKE about joining me in visiting Cuba, he was willing to come with an open mind. He recognized the failure of the continuing U.S. embargo, and his partnership helped us create a new path forward that culminated in the release of Alan Gross, an American long imprisoned in Cuba, and restored diplomatic relations between our two countries. The few minutes on the tarmac in Cuba while we waited to bring Mr. Gross back home after 5 years in captivity are some of the most meaningful minutes of my life. Senator FLAKE's partnership helped lead to that moment.

While the release of Alan Gross was the most dramatic event in U.S.-Cuban relations in a generation, Senator FLAKE has also partnered with me on initiatives to encourage Cuban entrepreneurs, open Cuban markets to American farmers and agriculture, and boost the Cuban Government's respect for human rights. His assistance from across the aisle has been helpful in shining light on the more than 50 years of failed policy toward this small island neighbor.

I have also watched with admiration JEFF's commitment of the last month in protecting one of the most pivotal national security investigations in our Nation's history—the special counsel's investigation into Russian interference in our elections. The security and sanctity of our elections is a cornerstone of our democracy. As he rounds out this chapter of his career, Senator FLAKE's stance and insistence that the Senate act to protect the work of the special counsel has been laudable.

I will be sad to see Senator FLAKE leave, and the Senate will be losing an